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14 April 1986

Fritz -- Your 14 April paper on things Soviet.

1. An excellent piece, well conceived and succinctly expressed. I particularly like your conclusions (p. 12) re improving intelligence.

2. You might want to consider rephrasing the order of things in the paper so that it will be more apparent to the DCI, at the outset, what the paper and the meeting are all about, and what we want to come out of all this. At present, the paper is a bit diffuse. Putting in effect a Key Judgments up front would not only give the DCI an earlier and sharper clue, but would help discipline the meeting's discussion so that it doesn't wander around too much.

3. In my view the paper's principal purposes (and hence Key Judgments in effect) are:

- What new to expect from Gorbachev, if any, regarding run up to another Summit.
- The possibility -- and whatever odds we wish to state -- re Gorbachev shifting to a more truculent course if by the 1988 US elections the Soviets haven't gotten what they have wanted.
- In the meantime, and in any event, the pressing need for the USG to get its policy act in order, speak with one voice, etc.
- The so-what (your three bombs on p. 12) for mandatory improvements in intelligence procedure, if we are to support policymakers adequately.

4. Additional items which should be added to the paper and the discussion:

- A somewhat fuller treatment of the present debate within the Soviet military (pages 3-4, re nuclear and conventional). Can we make any judgment as to how this debate will come out? What would be some of its major resource and policy consequences in the event the "high tech conventionalization" types win out?
- While I agree with your skepticism about the Soviet course, we should specifically take intelligence steps to insure that the US does not overlook or miss any perhaps serious overtures on the Soviet side.

H
Hal Ford

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